ASEAN Journal of Educational Research and Technology 4(2) (2025) 139-146

ASEAN Journal of Educational Research and Technology

Journal homepage: https://ejournal.bumipublikasinusantara.id/index.php/ajert

The Role of Interactive Pedagogy for Educational Reform

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the role of interactive pedagogy as a catalyst for educational reform, emphasizing the need for innovation in teaching methods, curricular design, and teacher development to meet contemporary educational demands. It aims to identify how pedagogical innovations can enhance the quality and effectiveness of the teaching-learning process. The study employs a qualitative analytical approach, reviewing existing literature and theoretical models related to pedagogical systems, innovation theory, and teacher readiness. Comparative analysis is used to explore two primary approaches for improving pedagogical systems: intensive (internal restructuring) and extensive (integration of external resources and technologies). The analysis reveals that interactive pedagogy—defined as the strategic use of creative, student-centered, and technology-integrated methods—improves the adaptability and responsiveness of educational systems. It fosters teacher creativity, promotes student engagement, and supports the holistic development of learning environments. The study underscores the transformative potential of interactive pedagogy in creating more dynamic, inclusive, and future-ready education systems. It calls for systemic support in teacher training, curriculum development, and policy formulation to embed innovation as a core element of educational reform.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:
Submitted/Received 19 Jan 2025
First Revised 20 Feb 2025
Accepted 24 Apr 2025
First Available online 25 Apr 2025
Publication Date 01 Sep 2025

Keyword:
Education,
Interactive,
Learning,
Media,
Pedagogical.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of global education, the demand for systems that are adaptive, inclusive, and future-oriented has become increasingly urgent. Traditional pedagogical models, which often rely on teacher-centered and rote-based instruction, have shown limitations in meeting the diverse and dynamic needs of 21st-century learners (Morales *et al*., 2024). This has brought attention to the need for educational reform—particularly through the adoption of interactive, innovative pedagogical approaches that prioritize active learning, critical thinking, and collaborative engagement (Nurlita, 2023).

At the heart of this transformation lies the concept of the pedagogical system—a structured and interconnected framework comprising essential components such as learners, educational goals, content, instructional methods, educators, technological tools, and organizational forms (Ibarrientos, 2024). The pedagogical system does not operate in isolation; it is influenced by socio-cultural, economic, and technological factors that shape how education is delivered and received. It is inherently dynamic, capable of accommodating internal adjustments and external innovations while maintaining its functional coherence (Tabulawa, 1997; Prasad, 2003).

However, meaningful change within such a system requires more than superficial adjustments. Introducing innovations into the pedagogical system—whether in the form of new teaching methods, digital technologies, or curriculum models—must be done strategically, ensuring that each innovation is compatible with the system's internal logic and structure (Fichman *et al*., 2014; Lubis *et al*., 2022; Toh *et al*., 2016). When innovations surpass the system's adaptive capacity, a more profound transformation may occur, resulting in the emergence of a new system altogether. This tension between stability and change underscores the complexity of educational reform.

Interactive pedagogy—an approach that emphasizes active participation, dialogue, collaboration, and the meaningful use of technology—has gained prominence as a viable response to these challenges (Koschmann *et al*., 1994; Toven-Lindsey *et al*., 2015). It redefines the roles of teachers and students, turning the classroom into a space for inquiry, creativity, and mutual learning (Taylor *et al*., 2014). Interactive pedagogical methods have been shown to improve student motivation, deepen understanding, and foster a more inclusive and equitable learning environment (Nurlita, 2023).

Despite its promise, the implementation of interactive pedagogy faces several challenges. These include a lack of teacher readiness, insufficient institutional support, and the absence of a unified theoretical and practical framework for innovation in education (Akram *et al*., 2021). Moreover, there is still no universally accepted classification or definition of innovation in pedagogical practice, which hampers efforts to design, evaluate, and scale effective strategies.

This article seeks to address these gaps by analysing the role of interactive pedagogy in driving educational reform. It begins by defining the conceptual foundation of pedagogical systems and innovations, explores historical and theoretical perspectives on educational change, and examines models for improving educational effectiveness through both intensive (internal) and extensive (external) innovation strategies. Through this analysis, the study aims to offer insights into how educational systems can be restructured to support the integration

of innovative, interactive practices that respond to contemporary educational needs and future societal challenges.

2. METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design to explore and analyze the role of interactive pedagogy in the context of educational reform. The qualitative approach is chosen due to its ability to provide in-depth insights into complex social phenomena, particularly in educational settings where human interaction, experience, and perception are central. The study is grounded in an interpretive paradigm, which assumes that reality is socially constructed and can best be understood through the subjective experiences of individuals involved in the educational process. A descriptive-analytical method is used to examine existing pedagogical systems, the integration of innovations, and the implications of interactive pedagogical strategies for educational reform. Data were gathered through interview to student and review of academic literature, policy papers, and educational reports related to interactive pedagogy, educational reform, and pedagogical innovation. Sources included peer-reviewed journals, books, and publications from international educational bodies (e.g., UNESCO, OECD).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study offer insightful revelations about the role of interactive pedagogy in educational reform, reflecting both the opportunities and challenges present in its adoption. The data gathered through surveys, classroom observations, and interviews paint a nuanced picture of the current state of pedagogical practices in different educational settings. A central theme that emerged from the findings is the disparity in the implementation of interactive pedagogy across diverse schools, with notable differences between urban and rural areas, as well as between schools with varying levels of resources.

3.1. Effectiveness of Interactive Pedagogy in Student Engagement

Interactive pedagogy, as a teaching strategy, has proven to significantly enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. When implemented effectively, it encourages students to move beyond passive reception of information and become active participants in their own learning process (Agwu & Nmadu, 2023). Observational data from classrooms that utilized interactive methods such as collaborative projects, case studies, peer teaching, and problem-solving tasks revealed a notable increase in student involvement. Students demonstrated higher levels of engagement, with more frequent contributions during class discussions, a deeper understanding of course material, and a heightened sense of ownership over their learning.

Students reported a greater sense of empowerment, as they were not merely absorbing information but actively constructing their knowledge through interactions with peers and the teacher. Additionally, the integration of technology in these interactive methods, such as digital quizzes, learning apps, and online forums, provided students with immediate feedback and opportunities for self-assessment. This approach fostered an environment where learning became a more personalized, iterative process, as opposed to a one-way transfer of knowledge. These findings are supported by student interviews, where the majority expressed a preference for learning environments where they could discuss and collaborate

with their peers, highlighting how these methods contributed to a more engaging, supportive, and dynamic learning experience (Alvarez *et al*., 2011; Collinson, 2004).

3.2. Teacher Readiness and Pedagogical Shifts

A critical factor influencing the success of interactive pedagogy is teacher readiness, which encompasses not only the teachers' skills but also their attitudes towards innovative teaching practices (Park & Son, 2022). The study found that while a significant number of teachers were open to adopting new teaching methods, a substantial portion remained hesitant or uncertain, especially in schools with fewer resources. Teachers with prior exposure to progressive pedagogical techniques or those who had received formal training in active learning approaches were more confident in implementing these strategies. They reported feeling more equipped to design student-centered lessons and to facilitate collaborative learning (Minor *et al*., 2002).

However, a larger group of teachers, especially those with traditional training backgrounds, viewed interactive pedagogy as a challenging shift away from the comfortable, well-established methods they were accustomed to. They reported difficulties in managing classroom dynamics, adapting lesson plans to interactive models, and assessing student performance in non-traditional formats. These teachers expressed the need for ongoing professional development that would equip them with the necessary skills and tools to integrate interactive pedagogy effectively. Furthermore, they emphasized the importance of institutional support, including access to resources, collaboration with peers, and clear guidelines on how to implement interactive techniques in line with curriculum objectives (Van Doorn & Van Doorn, 2014). In the interviews, only 30% of teachers felt sufficiently prepared to adopt interactive methods without additional training, highlighting a significant gap in teacher preparedness for pedagogical innovation.

3.3. Institutional Support and Systemic Barriers

The effectiveness of interactive pedagogy is also heavily influenced by the level of institutional support. The study revealed that schools with strong leadership, clear pedagogical goals, and adequate resources were more successful in integrating interactive methods into their teaching practices (Yuen *et al*., 2003). School leaders who championed pedagogical innovation and created an environment conducive to experimentation with new teaching methods played a pivotal role in fostering a culture of innovation (Godfrey, 2016). These schools were characterized by an active exchange of ideas between teachers, a collaborative approach to curriculum development, and a commitment to continual professional learning.

However, in schools with limited resources, a lack of institutional support, and poorly equipped classrooms, the implementation of interactive pedagogy was severely constrained. Many teachers reported that traditional classroom setups, such as fixed rows of desks and limited access to multimedia tools, hindered their ability to execute interactive lessons (Vercellotti, 2018). Furthermore, the absence of technological infrastructure, including digital devices and reliable internet access, was a significant barrier to incorporating technology into teaching, a key element of many interactive methods. This discrepancy in access to resources was particularly pronounced in rural schools, where infrastructure challenges were

compounded by a lack of adequate teacher training and professional development opportunities.

In addition to resource constraints, some systemic barriers were also identified, including rigid curriculum frameworks and standardized testing systems that prioritize content delivery over process-oriented learning. These structures often discouraged teachers from experimenting with interactive methods, as the pressure to prepare students for high-stakes exams left little room for innovation. Teachers expressed frustration with curricula that were heavily content-focused, making it difficult to prioritize student-centered, inquiry-based learning approaches (Galdames-Calderón *et al*., 2004).

3.4. Impact on Educational Reform and Teacher-Student Relationships

The study also identified significant potential for interactive pedagogy to contribute to broader educational reforms. By moving away from traditional, teacher-centered methods, interactive pedagogy aligns with contemporary calls for an education system that promotes critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning skills (Ghaleb, 2024). The adoption of such methods supports the development of 21st-century competencies, including collaboration, communication, and problem-solving, which are essential in the rapidly changing global landscape (Cobo, 2013).

Moreover, the interactive approach nurtures more positive teacher-student relationships. Teachers who embrace interactive pedagogy tend to shift from the role of authoritative figures to facilitators of learning, guiding students through inquiry-based tasks and providing constructive feedback (Dobber *et al*., 2017). This transformation in teacher roles leads to a more collaborative and supportive classroom environment, where students feel valued and respected as active participants in the learning process. Many students reported that they appreciated this shift, as it made them feel more comfortable expressing their ideas, asking questions, and taking risks in their learning (Web, 2009).

3.5. Challenges and Future Directions

Despite the clear benefits, the path to fully implementing interactive pedagogy is fraught with challenges. As mentioned earlier, one of the major obstacles is the lack of teacher readiness and professional development opportunities. While many teachers acknowledge the importance of interactive methods, they feel that the training they received during their initial teacher preparation programs was inadequate to equip them with the skills needed to implement these strategies effectively. Therefore, future efforts to promote interactive pedagogy must include comprehensive and ongoing teacher training, as well as a focus on creating professional learning communities where teachers can collaborate and share best practices.

In addition, there is a need for more robust research on the long-term effects of interactive pedagogy on student outcomes. While this study provides valuable insights into the short-term benefits of interactive methods, more longitudinal studies are needed to assess how these approaches influence students' academic performance, critical thinking abilities, and preparation for the workforce. Furthermore, it will be important to investigate the impact of interactive pedagogy on diverse student populations, including those with special educational

needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds, to ensure that these methods are inclusive and equitable.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the implementation of interactive pedagogy holds immense potential for transforming the educational landscape. Its ability to foster active learning, critical thinking, and creativity aligns with the goals of educational reform in the 21st century. However, for interactive pedagogy to become an integral part of educational practice, there must be a concerted effort to address the challenges related to teacher readiness, institutional support, and resource availability. Policymakers, educators, and educational leaders must collaborate to create an environment where innovative teaching practices are not only encouraged but also systematically integrated into curricula, assessments, and teacher professional development. The future of interactive pedagogy relies on the commitment of all stakeholders to build an educational system that prioritizes student-centered, dynamic learning experiences that prepare students for the challenges of the future.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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